



HEALTH CARE COMMITTEE

Thursday, December 16, 2021
Room 327B, State Capitol
Bismarck, North Dakota

Representative Robin Weisz, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Members present: Representatives Robin Weisz, Mike Beltz, Ruth Buffalo, Gretchen Dobervich, Clayton Fegley, Jim Kasper, George Keiser*, Lisa Meier, Marvin E. Nelson, Bob Paulson, Karen M. Rohr, Greg Westlund; Senators Howard C. Anderson, Jr., Tim Mathern, Dave Oehlke, Kristin Roers

Members absent: Representatives Pamela Anderson, Zachary Ista

Others present: Senator Dick Dever, Bismarck
See [Appendix A](#) for additional persons present.

**Attended remotely*

It was moved by Senator Mathern, seconded by Representative Rohr, and carried on a voice vote that the minutes of the August 4, 2021, meeting be approved as distributed.

MEDICATION OPTIMIZATION STUDY

Ms. Samantha E. Kramer, Senior Counsel, Legislative Council, reviewed a memorandum entitled [Medication Optimization Study - Background Memorandum](#).

Mr. John Arnold, Deputy Commissioner, Insurance Department, presented a status report on the Insurance Department's study of medication optimization. He noted although the department received the federal grant necessary to conduct the study roughly 6 months later than anticipated, the study will be completed on time. He indicated the authority given to the department through the passage of House Bill No. 1032 (2021) to receive and publish drug cost transparency information highlighted the lack of expertise within the department to analyze pharmaceutical data.

Mr. Mike Schwab, Executive Vice President, North Dakota Pharmacists Association, provided information ([Appendix B](#)) relating to medication optimization programs and recent pharmacy benefits manager litigation.

Mr. Matt Schaefer, Director of Government Affairs, Medica, indicated using medication synchronization to coordinate medications allows patients to pick up all their medications from the pharmacy at the same time. He noted Medica works directly with providers to focus on outcomes rather than transactional relationships.

Ms. Megan Houn, Director of Government Relations, Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota, provided information ([Appendix C](#)) relating to medication optimization program management.

Dr. Danny Weiss, Executive Director, Pharmacy, Sanford Health Plan, provided information ([Appendix D](#)) relating to medication optimization and adherence. He noted:

- The importance of balancing the needs of the patient today while keeping premiums affordable for tomorrow;
- The team uses refill and patient adherence data to analyze whether a patient is adequately and reliably taking medications; and
- Developing relationships with patients assists the team in determining who to work with in care delivery both inside and outside Sanford.

Mr. John Savageau, Pharmacy Director, Sanford Health Bismarck, and Mr. Monte Roemmich, Pharmacy Manager, Sanford Health Fargo, provided information ([Appendix E](#)) relating to medication optimization in the clinical setting. They noted:

- When a pharmacist does not speak to a patient post hospital discharge, there is a 49 percent rate of readmission compared to an 18 to 19 percent rate when a pharmacist speaks to a patient within 48 hours of discharge; and
- Sanford created a protocol with the Board of Pharmacy and Sanford Medical to allow a pharmacist to authorize a refill of chronic, noncontrolled medications.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG STUDY

Mr. Brendan Joyce, Administrator of Pharmacy Services, Department of Human Services, provided information ([Appendix F](#)) relating to medical assistance pharmacy services. He noted:

- The Department of Human Services strives to be a leader in claim payment methodology by leveraging prospective drug use review edits to ensure the best possible pharmaceutical care for members;
- If North Dakota medical assistance pharmacy growth matched the National Health Expenditures Medicaid pharmacy growth percentages since 1999, North Dakota's net expenditures would have been \$22.8 million higher in 2019; and
- The Department of Human Services has a pharmacy claim payment system that is part of the Medicaid management information system.

Mr. Drew Gattine, Senior Policy Fellow, National Academy for State Health Policy, provided information ([Appendix G](#)) regarding state-administered pharmacy benefits management plans.

Ms. Jennifer S. N. Clark, Senior Counsel and Assistant Code Revisor, Legislative Council, reviewed a presentation entitled *Summary of Nevada Senate Bill No. 378 (2019), Regarding Prescription Drugs* ([Appendix H](#)).

Mr. Benjamin Link, Vice President of Pharmacy, 3 Axis Advisors, provided information ([Appendix I](#)) regarding the Ohio experience in establishing a single pharmacy benefits manager for state health benefit plans.

Mr. Scott Miller, Executive Director, Public Employees Retirement System (PERS), provided information ([Appendix J](#)) relating to the transition of Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage from Express Scripts to Humana. He noted:

- PERS issued a request for proposals for the 2022 Part D plan within the Dakota Retiree Plan in April of 2021;
- The Part D plan renews every year rather than every other year like the health plan; and
- PERS received seven proposals from six vendors and ultimately selected Humana after considering the factors required by North Dakota Century Code Section 54-52.1-04(1).

Mr. Tim Snyder, Senior Vice President, Group Medicare, Humana, provided information ([Appendix K](#)) relating to the PERS transition. He noted:

- Humana is the second largest Medicare Advantage Part D program in the country;
- Humana has been in the state over 15 years and has contracts with 175 unique pharmacies; and
- 48 to 50 percent of pharmacies in the state receive higher payments because they are located in rural areas.

Mr. Gary Boehler, Pharmacist Consultant, Dakota Drug, Inc., provided information ([Appendix L](#)) relating to the PERS transition.

Senator Dever provided comments ([Appendix M](#)) relating to the PERS transition.

Mr. Schwab indicated the discussions relating to the bids received by the PERS Board were held in an executive session. He noted the North Dakota Pharmacists Association has been more involved in the process in the past.

No further business appearing, Chairman Weisz adjourned the meeting at 4:20 p.m.

Jennifer S. N. Clark
Senior Counsel and Assistant Code Revisor

Samantha E. Kramer
Senior Counsel

ATTACH:13